

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 L-03 COA-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

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DRAFTED BY EUR/ P: WJGEHRON: SS

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APPROVED BY EUR/ P: ESAVAGE

EUR/ NE - MR. GEORGE

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R 292114 Z MAY 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

UNCLAS STATE 102669

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, IC, UK

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE RE " COD WAR"

FOLLOWING ARE PERTINENT PORTIONS NOON BRIEFING MAY 29 RE
" COD WAR":

Q: WHAT IS NOW THE U. S. POSITION REGARDING THE SO- CALLED
COD WAR BETWEEN BRITAIN AND ICELAND? WHERE DO WE STAND?

A: WELL, BASICALLY WE HAVE TOLD BOTH PARTIES WHO ARE
GOOD FRIENDS OF OURS AND NATO ALLIES THAT WE HOPE THE
DISPUTE CAN BE RESOLVED AMICABLY AND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
I MIGHT ALSO ADD THAT WE HAVE CAREFULLY AVOIDED ANY ROLE
IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE DISPUTE.

Q: HAVE WE SUGGESTED A PROCEDURE FOR RESOLVING IT?

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A: NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO -- NO SPECIFIC PROCEDURE.

Q: WILL THIS BE DISCUSSED WHEN THE GROUP GOES TO ICELAND?

A: I REALLY WOULDN' T WANT TO TRY AND SAY AT THIS TIME

;
WHETHER OR NOT IT WILL BE DISCUSSED. I REALLY DON' T KNOW.
IT MAY OR MAY NOT BE. I AM JUST NOT FAMILIAR --

Q: IS MR. ROGERS GOING TO ICELAND, TOO?

A: YES, HE IS.

Q: WILL HE SEE SOMEBODY -- IS THERE ANYTHING ON THE
SCHEDULE TO SEE --

A: I HAVEN' T SEEN THE SCHEDULE MYSELF. I BELIEVE THAT
AT CERTAIN POINTS IN TIME, WHILE THE PARTY IS THERE, THEY
WILL OF COURSE BE SEEING ICELANDIC OFFICIALS.

Q: BASICALLY, THOUGH, IS IT NOT THE CASE THAT THE UNITED
STATES' GENERAL POSITION ON TERRITORIAL AND FISHING COIN-
CIDES MORE CLOSELY WITH BRITAIN' S POSITION THAN IT WOULD
WITH THE POSITION THAT ICELAND HAS RECENTLY TAKEN?

A: WELL, I DON' T WANT TO INTERJECT MYSELF AGAIN INTO A
DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES. WITH RESPECT TO THE
GENERAL QUESTION OF TERRITORIAL WATERS AND SO ON, OUR
GENERAL POLICY IS TO URGE THAT ALL OF THESE COMPLICATED
ISSUES BE WORKED OUT DEFINITELY IN THE MULTILATERAL
CONTEXT IN THE FORTHCOMING LAW OF THE SEAS CONFERENCE.

Q: IS THAT THIS YEAR?

A: A TWO- WEEK ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION FOR THE LAW OF THE
SEAS CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE AT THE UNITED
NATIONS IN NOVEMBER- DECEMBER OF THIS YEAR. I UNDERSTAND
THAT THE SUBSTANTIVE SESSION IS SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN
SANTIAGO, CHILE, FOR ABOUT AN EIGHT- WEEK PERIOD IN
APRIL- MAY 1974.

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Q: CAN YOU SAY WHETHER THE BRITISH HAVE APPROACHED THE
UNITED STATES EITHER IN LONDON OR HERE TO DISCUSS THE
MATTER? PRIOR TO THE VISIT TO ICELAND.

A: NO, I CANNOT.

Q: IS THAT BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW OR BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SAY WHETHER THEY DID?

A: I WILL LOOK INTO IT.

Q: WASN'T THE SECRETARY ASKED BY THE ICELANDIC FOREIGN

MINISTRY LAST MAY TO SPEAK TO THE BRITISH RESPECTING THE FIFTY- MILE LIMIT -- AND THE SECRETARY, WE WERE TOLD THEN, AGREED TO DO SO.

A: I AM NOT AWARE OF THAT CONVERSATION. I WOULD HAVE TO LOOK INTO THAT PARTICULAR SET OF CONVERSATIONS AND WHAT THE SECRETARY MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE PROMISED AT THAT TIME. I REALLY AM NOT FAMILIAR WITH THAT DISCUSSION.

Q: WELL, IN OUR CONTACTS WITH BOTH PARTIES THAT YOU MENTIONED, HAVE WE TOLD THEM TO COOL IT UNTIL THE CONFERENCE? IS THAT THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT WE HAVE SAID?

A: WELL, I HAVE STATED TO YOU WHAT OUR GENERAL POLICY IS, HOW THE MATTER SHOULD BE APPROACHED. I HAVE ALSO SAID THAT WE HAVE CAREFULLY AVOIDED ANY ROLE IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE DISPUTE. I THINK THAT REALLY COVERS IT.

Q: THE QUESTION IS, THOUGH, HAVE WE TRANSLATED OUR GENERAL POLICY INTO A SPECIFIC SUGGESTION TO BOTH PARTIES?

A: I DON'T THINK WE HAVE GONE THAT FAR DOWN THE PATH, REALLY.

Q: BUT IRRESPECTIVE OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TWO, THE UNCLASSIFIED

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UNITED STATES HAS A POSITION WHICH IS CERTAINLY NOT THE ICELANDIC POSITION.

A: YES, WE HAVE A GENERAL POSITION, APPROACH, WHICH WE THINK SHOULD BE WORKED OUT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE LAW OF THE SEAS CONFERENCE, THAT IS CORRECT.

Q: AND WHAT IS THIS GENERAL POSITION? STILL THE SAME? I THINK IT IS TWELVE MILES, ISN'T IT, FOR FISHING?

A: I AM NOT SURE WHAT SPECIFICALLY OUR FISHING POSITION IS AT THE PRESENT TIME. EVEN IF I DID KNOW, I REALLY DON'T WANT TO BE DRAWN INTO IT, BECAUSE, AS I HAVE TRIED TO EMPHASIZE HERE, WE DO CONSIDER THAT THESE ISSUES

SHOULD BE WORKED OUT WITHIN THE CONTEXT -- WELL, HOPEFULLY,
ONE, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE TWO PARTIES THEMSELVES;
AND SECONDLY, IN A GENERAL WAY IN TERMS OF THE FORTH-
COMING LAW OF THE SEAS CONFERENCE. ROGERS

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